

LANGUAGE PREFERENCES OF CALIFORNIA AIDS DRUG ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ADAP) CLIENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objectives. Our objective was to examine the language demographics of the California AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) and determine if ADAP is in compliance with Federal and State guidelines regarding the availability of non-English written materials for eligible “Limited English Proficient” (LEP) individuals. According to Federal guidelines, for example, if five percent or 1,000 of the eligible population to be served for a federally-funded program speak a non-English language, then that language must be available in written documents for that particular program.

Design. We cross-tabulated the race/ethnicity of ADAP clients in 2002 with their preferred language for printed materials. Clients were also compared to the 2000 California Census results to determine if the percentage of ADAP clients is similar to the statewide census data.

Results. Only Spanish met the criteria of constituting five percent or 1,000 clients’ LEP language preference in ADAP. All other LEP language groups (Tagalog, Cantonese/Mandarin, and Other) were preferred by less than one percent of ADAP clients. Since ADAP materials are available in Spanish, ADAP is in compliance with Federal guidelines. The proportion of Whites and Hispanics/Latinos were similar between ADAP and the State’s population, but ADAP had a larger percentage of African Americans and a smaller percentage of Asian/Pacific Islanders than the State.

Conclusions. With written materials available in English, Spanish, Cantonese/Mandarin, and Tagalog, ADAP meets its program goal and exceeds the Federal guideline of providing publications in different languages when clients prefer a specific language other than English.

Introduction

English is the predominant language of California. According to the 2000 California Census, English is the only language spoken by 60.5 percent of California residents. Of those California residents who speak languages other than English, the 2000 California Census reported that 28.8 percent above the age of four spoke English "well to very well."

California is also home to thousands of national origin minorities who are LEP. That is, they cannot speak, read, write, or understand the English language at a level that permits them to interact effectively with healthcare providers and social service agencies. Because of these language differences and their inability to speak or understand English, LEP persons are often excluded from programs, experience delays or denials of services, or receive care and services based on inaccurate or incomplete information.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides that no person may be denied meaningful access to a recipient's/covered entity's benefits and services on the basis of national origin. To comply with the Title VI requirement, all entities that receive Federal funds from the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services must ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to and can understand information contained in program-related written documents.

Commonly encountered languages are those that are used by a significant number or percentage of the population in the service area. An effective language assistance program ensures that written materials routinely provided in English to applicants, patients/consumers, and the public are available in commonly encountered languages other than English.

AIDS Drug Assistance Program

California's AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) provides access to prescription drugs used to treat HIV and opportunistic infections for individuals with HIV/AIDS who could not otherwise afford them. To ensure that federally-funded programs, including ADAP, comply with their obligation to provide written translations in non-English languages, guidelines have been set forth by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Policy Guidance on the Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination as it Affects Persons with Limited English. OCR considers a program to be in compliance if:

- (A) The recipient/covered entity provides translated written materials, including vital documents, for each eligible LEP language group that constitutes ten percent or 3,000, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be directly affected by the recipient/covered entity's program;

(B) Regarding LEP language groups that do not fall within paragraph (A) above, but constitute five percent or 1,000, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be directly affected, the recipient/covered entity ensures that, at a minimum, vital documents are translated into the appropriate non-English languages of such LEP persons. Translation of other documents, if needed, can be provided orally; and

(C) Notwithstanding paragraphs (A) and (B) above, a recipient with fewer than 100 persons in a language group eligible to be served or likely to be directly affected by the recipient/covered entity's program, does not translate written materials but provides written notice in the primary language of the LEP language group of the right to receive competent oral translation of written materials.ⁱ

Additionally, California Health and Safety (H&S) Code Section 120970, which discusses ADAP contractors, states that information regarding program policies and procedures, including enrollment procedures, eligibility guidelines, and lists of drugs covered, is made available to clients in appropriate literacy levels. The languages provided include English, Spanish, Mandarin/Cantonese, and Tagalog as determined by the Department of Health Services. Currently, ADAP has printed materials in all of these languages. The purpose of this study was to examine the language demographics of ADAP clients and determine if ADAP is in compliance with the related Federal guidelines and California H&S Code provisions.

Method

As part of the ADAP enrollment process or annual recertification, applicants are asked questions regarding their identification, HIV/AIDS diagnosis status, insurance information, and income verification/eligibility. Of particular interest, applicants are asked for their preferred language for printed materials with the option of English, Spanish, Tagalog, Cantonese/Mandarin, or Other (a blank space is provided to specify the other language).

To help ensure that published ADAP information is appropriately available to the clients it serves and those eligible to be served, we cross-tabulated the race/ethnicity of ADAP clients in 2002 with their preferred language for printed materials. Clients were also compared to the 2000 California Census results to determine if the percentage of ADAP clients is similar to the statewide census data.

ⁱ "Policy Guidance on the Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination as it Affects Persons with Limited English Proficiency." 67 *Federal Register* 4968 (February 1, 2002).

Results

Table 1 shows the number and percentage of ADAP clients by race/ethnicity in comparison to the 2000 California Census data. ADAP had a slightly higher percentage of Hispanic/Latinos than the overall population in California (34.4 percent versus 32.4 percent) but a slightly lower percentage of Whites (43.6 percent versus 46.6 percent). Among the three most populous race groups, the largest discrepancy was among African Americans with 15 percent in ADAP but only 6.3 percent in the State.

Table 1
Race/Ethnic Comparison of 2002 California ADAP Clients
with 2000 California Census

| Race | ADAP | | Census | |
|---|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| White | 10,977 | 43.6% | 15,771,163 | 46.6% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 8,641 | 34.4% | 10,969,132 | 32.4% |
| African American | 3,779 | 15.0% | 2,147,885 | 6.3% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 421 | 1.7% | 3,642,542 | 10.8% |
| Multi-Racial | 303 | 1.2% | 988,007 | 2.9% |
| Other* | 1,031 | 4.1% | 352,919 | 1.0% |
| Total | 25,152 | 100.0% | 33,871,648 | 100.0% |
| *For ADAP, Other includes Native American/Indian (104 or 0.4%) and Unknown (927 or 3.7%). California Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS, AIDS Drug Assistance Program U.S. Census Bureau, Primary Profile 1, Census 2000, Summary File 3, California | | | | |

Next, we compared the language preferred by ADAP clients with the reported languages spoken from the statewide census data. As shown in Table 2, a higher percentage of ADAP clients preferred English when compared to the State census data for those who spoke English as their primary language (87.1 percent versus 60.5 percent). The percentage of ADAP clients who preferred Spanish, however, was lower than the State census (11.9 percent versus 25.8 percent). Indo European and Asian/Pacific Islander languages appeared in the State data (4.3 percent and 8.6 percent, respectively) but were negligible among ADAP clients.^{ii iii} It is important to note that ADAP clients are 18 years old and above, whereas the census language spoken data comes from Californians five years old and above.

Only Spanish met the more stringent criteria of constituting five percent or 1,000 clients' LEP language preference in ADAP. All other LEP language groups were preferred by less than one percent of ADAP clients. Since ADAP materials are available in Spanish, ADAP is in compliance with Federal guidelines.

ⁱⁱ California Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS, AIDS Drug Assistance Program, 2002 data.

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Census Bureau, Primary Profile 1, Census 2000, Summary File 3, California.

Table 2
Language Preference Comparison of 2002 California ADAP
Clients with 2000 California Census

| Preferred Language | ADAP* | | Census** | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| English | 21,915 | 87.1% | 19,014,873 | 60.5% |
| Spanish | 2,995 | 11.9% | 8,105,505 | 25.8% |
| Indo European | N/A | N/A | 1,335,332 | 4.3% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 12 | 0.0% | 2,709,179 | 8.6% |
| Other | 230 | 0.9% | 251,740 | 0.8% |
| Total | 25,152 | 100.0% | 31,416,629 | 100.0% |

*Population 18 Years and Over.

**Population 5 Years and Over.

California Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS, AIDS Drug Assistance Program
 U.S. Census Bureau, Primary Profile 1, Census 2000, Summary File 3, California

To further examine the language demographics of ADAP clients, we cross-tabulated race by the client's preferred language. Table 3 shows that English was the predominant language for all race/ethnicities. For Hispanic/Latino clients, two-thirds chose English as their primary language while the remaining one-third chose Spanish. The most variability appeared among the multi-racial clients with 46.2 percent preferring English, 34 percent preferring Spanish, and 19.8 percent preferring another language (i.e., not Tagalog or Cantonese/Mandarin).

Table 3
Language Preferences of 2002 California ADAP Clients
by Race/Ethnicity

| Preferred Language | White | African American | Hispanic/Latino | Asian/Pacific Isl | N. Amer/Indian | Multi-Racial |
|--------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------|
| | Freq (Pct) | Freq (Pct) | Freq (Pct) | Freq (Pct) | Freq (Pct) | Freq (Pct) |
| English | 10,897 (99.3%) | 3,703 (98.0%) | 5,819 (67.3%) | 402 (95.5%) | 104 (100.0%) | 140 (46.2%) |
| Spanish | 15 (00.1%) | 24 (00.6%) | 2,818 (32.6%) | 1 (00.2%) | 0 (00.0%) | 103 (34.0%) |
| Tagalog | 0 (00.0%) | 0 (00.0%) | 0 (00.0%) | 2 (00.5%) | 0 (00.0%) | 0 (00.0%) |
| Chinese* | 0 (00.0%) | 0 (00.0%) | 0 (00.0%) | 6 (01.4%) | 0 (00.0%) | 0 (00.0%) |
| Other | 65 (01.4%) | 52 (01.4%) | 4 (00.0%) | 10 (02.4%) | 0 (00.0%) | 60 (19.8%) |
| Total | 10,977 | 3,779 | 8,641 | 421 | 104 | 303 |

*Chinese includes Cantonese and Mandarin.

California Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS, AIDS Drug Assistance Program

Summary

An effective language assistance program ensures that written materials that are routinely provided in English to applicants, clients and the public are available in regularly encountered languages other than English. This study was designed to ensure that ADAP is providing written materials for the population eligible to be served or likely to be directly affected by the program that needs information in a language other than English.

Our study found that the proportion of Whites and Hispanics/Latinos were similar between ADAP and the State, but ADAP had a larger percentage of African Americans and a smaller percentage of Asian/Pacific Islanders than the State. English accounts for 87.2 percent of the languages spoken by ADAP clients and Spanish accounts for 11.9 percent. Less than one percent of the ADAP clients served in 2002 spoke a language other than English or Spanish. With materials available in English, Spanish, Cantonese/Mandarin, and Tagalog, ADAP meets its program goal and exceeds the guidelines of providing publications in different languages when clients prefer a specific language other than English. As California's multi-racial population grows, ADAP will continue to monitor the language preferences of its clients to ensure written materials are available to those eligible for its program. With the implementation of California's Non-Name HIV Reporting System in July 2002, when reliable data becomes available, we will also be able to compare the racial demographics of ADAP to the State's HIV population.